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SYN. NO. _____

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

APRIL 19, 2005

There is growing alarm over the increased number of dog attacks throughout the County, particularly in the Antelope Valley. Both humans and domestic animals are the victims of these vicious attacks. There have been five known attacks in Antelope Valley in the past two months. One of the most severe attacks was caused by a pit bull mauling a woman in Quartz Hill. The surgeon who repaired this woman's badly damaged arm stated he had never seen such injuries caused by dog mauling in his 20 years of practice.

Past incidents have found irresponsible dog ownership in allowing dogs to roam loose, not maintaining secure fencing and failing to control, supervise and properly train their animals. It is incumbent that we make communities and neighborhoods safe and healthy for everyone. We need to explore ways, including added enforcement and public awareness, to prevent future tragedies and minimize public risk.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Animal Care and Control to work in conjunction with the Chief Administrative Office and report back to the Board of Supervisors in three weeks with recommendations on ways to lessen or mitigate these severe dog attacks.

#

MDA:mjj
dogattacks4-19-05

MOTION

BURKE _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

KNABE _____

ANTONOVICH _____

MOLINA _____

May 9, 2005

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
Room 383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012



Dear Supervisors:

Marcia Mayeda
Director

Administrative Office
5898 Cherry Ave.
Long Beach, CA 90805
(562) 728-4882
Fax (562) 422-3408
<http://animalcontrol.co.la.ca.us>



Shelter locations

11258 S. Garfield Ave.
Downey, CA 90242
(562) 940-6898

216 W. Victoria St.
Gardena, CA 90248
(310) 523-9566

4275 No. Elton
Baldwin Park, CA 91706
(626) 962-3577

5210 W. Avenue I
Lancaster, CA 93536
(661) 940-4191

31044 N. Charlie Cyn. Rd.
Castaic, CA 91384
(661) 257-3191

29525 Agoura Rd.
Agoura, CA 91301
(818) 991-0071

On April 19, the Board adopted a motion by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich directing our department to work with the Chief Administrative Office to prepare a response to the growing number of serious dog attacks in the Antelope Valley. We have worked closely with the CAO's office. This letter, drafted in consultation with the Chief Administrative Office, offers our response to the Board motion.

Already during 2005, our agency has responded to 15 dangerous or vicious animal incidents, including a very serious attack that occurred in the Quartz Hill community in March, which prompted the Board-adopted motion. During all of 2004, there were only five such attacks, so this year's year-to-date statistics represent a 300 percent increase over 2004, and the summer months - traditionally the time when such incidents are more likely to occur - have yet to arrive.

The problem is not the adequacy of existing laws. Current dangerous dog suppression laws, including those adopted by the Board previously, are well designed to handle the situation. Likewise, the problem is not prosecution. Our agency has a good working relationship with the District Attorney's office and has been successful in getting irresponsible pet owners prosecuted and convicted. In fact, based on our department's investigation, the District Attorney's office has filed a felony charge against the owners of the pit bull involved in the March attack.

Based on the number and severity of incidents, our agency believes that two related steps need to be taken. One involves a public education and community awareness campaign aimed at promoting compliance with animal control laws and increased reporting of suspect animals. We have initiated discussions with city representatives from Lancaster and Palmdale to include these cities' concerns in the action plans we develop for the Antelope Valley. My department is in the process of developing this campaign.

The other step, which we regard as the most crucial, is to increase enforcement by adding staffing to our Lancaster Animal Shelter, which serves the entire Antelope Valley. Actual field enforcement of animal control laws is the key to intervention before attacks happen. By having a stronger presence in the community, proactive enforcement of animal control laws will allow us to better prevent and more quickly respond to these dangerous situations.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Honorable Board of Supervisors
May 9, 2005
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The population surge in the Antelope Valley has also necessitated more services from my department to address related animal issues.

After studying this matter, we believe we must increase the shelter's field staff by at least four field officers. We also need one additional animal shelter aid to help field a growing number of service requests coming to the shelter.

The annual cost of this staff expansion, including salaries and benefits, would be \$245,412.22, including \$34,148.86 for an Animal Shelter Aid position to assist in handling the increased call volume coming to the shelter and \$211,263.36 for four Animal Control Officer I field positions to increase enforcement patrols in the Antelope Valley.

The CAO has given us approval to fill these positions immediately with our current budget savings, and will be increasing our 2005-2006 budget request to reflect the cost of these additional positions.

If you have any questions about this matter, please feel free to call me at (562) 728-4610.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M Mayeda".

Marcia Mayeda
Director

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Office
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer